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WAR INFORMATION BUREAU

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LECTURE XXXI.

ACTION IN AFRICA NORTH OF THE EQUATOR.

PROPHECIES, FULFILLED AND OTHERWISE. In our paper on "Egypt and the War" dated 14—12—40, it may be recalled that we ventured on a prophecy. "Mussolini's dream has long been the embodiment of the whole of North Africa in Italy's Empire, and Hitler has quite possibly promised him this as his share of the spoils, in return for active assistance in the invasion of England. The invasion has so far failed; the dream remains a dream………… Italy finds it increasingly difficult even to maintain her *status quo*. During the last four days, the British Army under General Wavell has launched an offensive……………… There is little risk in prophesying that Egypt is bound to play an increasingly large part in the course of this War against the World Dictators……….. Never since war began have the prospects in North African campaigns looked so bright for the Allies as now………"

We are now profoundly grateful to Providence, and to General Wavell and the Imperial Army under him, that the prophecy has been fulfilled in abundant measure. The Rome-Berlin Axis has been

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broken. The southern half of it has fallen. It is no longer an Italian *Empire* that we have to fight against. Except for a few terror-stricken, ill-fated patches in LIBYA, ERITREA, ABYSSINIA and SOMALILAND, Italian overlordship has practically disappeared from the African continent.

A BRILLIANT PATCH OF HISTORY. As early as November 1940, when Mr. Eden paid his visit to the Middle East, every preparation had been made with meticulous care for an attack on the Italian army in EGYPT; but the withdrawal of a part of the R. A. F. to the Greek theatre delayed the operations until the night of December 7 when a strong detachment of the Nile Army under Sir Maitland Wilson, comprising British and Imperial troops and a free French detachment, marched rapidly across seventy-five miles of desert and in almost clock-like co-ordination with the aerial and naval arms, captured SIDI EL BARRANI. That was a victory of the first order as Mr. Churchill has remarked. Three Italian divisions were completely destroyed and 5 Generals were captured in the action, together with some 30,000 prisoners and a very large quantity of stores. Then indeed, as since, General Wavell seems fully to have satisfied the test laid down by Napoleon—" When you tell me of victories, I say, show me the prisoners and the guns !"

This sweeping victory removed all immediate fear of an Italian invasion of EGYPT. The alternative before ITALY then was either that the Italian fleet should give battle, or the Italian army in North AFRICA should perish. " The effect of this victory on the course of the war and especially in facilitating a British campaign against the Italian possessions in AFRICA must be great." So we wrote on 21—12—40, and this prophecy too has been largely fulfilled. The Italian fleet, despite its boasted prowess, did not give battle, even when challenged. It withdrew into the Adriatic and we were told that it was carrying out manoeuvres in home ports. The other alternative, however, has eventuated. The Italian army in North AFRICA has, to all intents and purposes, perished.

A BUBBLE PRICKED. The effects of these disasters, following heavy and unexpected reverses in ALBANIA against the gallant Greeks, on the Italian Government were not long in showing themselves.

Before the first week of the war in North AFRICA was over, we saw cataclysmic changes taking place in the staff of the Italian army and navy. Trusted chiefs were either dismissed or retired for their failures on land and sea, and for some of them this must have been a relief, for not a few were already disgusted with the Fascist régime that had interfered so fatally with professional control of the Italian forces. Marshal Badoglio, Chief of Staff "resigned", Admiral Cavagnari, Chief of the Naval Staff and General Maria de Veechi, Governor of the Dodecanese Islands were "relieved at their own request", while two other high naval officials were "dismissed". Indications were not wanting that, should the hour come, Marshal Badoglio might be called on to head a revolt against the Fascist colossus itself, and all that the Mussolini family stands for. Anyhow, thenceforward Mussolini's star began to decline sharply and his prestige must now be at pretty low ebb. As the *Daily Herald* then wrote "Every new blow struck now at this ageing and discredited criminal will send a chorus of applause and rejoicing right round the world." The Greeks put a nail well into the Fascist coffin, but it was General Wavell who drove it so well and truly home!—to a chorus of applause throughout the world.

AN UNIQUE BATTLE GROUND. Campaigning in AFRICA is a very different matter from warfare in FRANCE and BELGIUM. It is even more unlike the sort of campaign which Hitler seems to be preparing against the British Isles.

There are four main frontiers in North AFRICA on which this war is being fought.

(*a*) The frontier between EGYPT and LIBYA, running southwards from the Mediterranean coast.

(*b*) The frontier between the SUDAN and ABYSSINIA, running more or less north and south from the Red Sea.

(*c*) The frontier between ABYSSINIA and KENYA.

(*d*) The frontier between ABYSSINIA and British SOMALILAND.

The total length of these four frontiers is approximately 3,800 miles, an enormous distance, and this factor of distance should always be remembered, as it naturally has a great influence on operations.

On several occasions since the war with ITALY began, the enemy have claimed striking successes on most of these frontiers. They announced the capture of little posts and villages as "great victories"

for the Italian troops, or they claimed the destruction or capture of a few armoured cars as "a serious British set-back". It is perfectly true that they once occupied various villages inside British territory on the Sudan frontier and on the Kenya frontier, and not unnaturally people asked, "Why have we lost these posts? Why haven't we held them more strongly? Oughtn't we to have put large enough forces in these places to prevent the enemy taking them?"

The answer to these criticisms is that to hold a continuous line of defence along these **3,800 miles of frontier would require enormous forces. The whole of the French Western Frontier, where the world's biggest armies have been employed, was less than a thousand miles in length!**

Even if such a defence line could be established on the African frontiers, it would be a futile thing to do. The enemy could at any time concentrate their forces at some particular point and break through what would necessarily be a very thin screen. Then they might be able to penetrate far into the interior and reach important objectives before the defenders could collect their scattered units for the counter-attack.

The problem the British were originally confronted with, therefore was how to defend areas so vast and frontiers so extensive, with inferior forces. The same problem is now even more formidable for the Italians today.

The Italians initially had bigger armies in Northern AFRICA than we had, **because our own dispositions were based on the assumption of the co-operation of the French in TUNISIA.** Moreover, in ABYSSINIA, the Italians had to maintain large forces *in peace time* in order to cope with possible rebellions among the Abyssinians, whereas in our territories, there being no rebels, our security forces were naturally very small.

A LOOK ROUND. So much for the terrain in which Imperial forces are now engaged. We propose now to consider the effect of separate operations against Italians in AFRICA north of the equator, principally in EGYPT, LIBYA, ERITREA and ABYSSINIA. MOROCCO and TANGIER are not yet ripe for discussion. The curious 'DAKAR incident' has already been discussed in a previous number.

EGYPT.—Of EGYPT we have already spoken at some length in an earlier Bulletin. Suffice it to say that since the all-powerful British thrust through LIBYA to BENGHAZI, all fear of any invasion against EGYPT has once for all vanished. BRITAIN's plighted word to EGYPT has been amply kept and honoured. EGYPT is now, and will remain, a strong ally of GREAT BRITAIN, enthusiastic where it was merely approving, confident where it was merely hopeful.

LIBYA.—A short history: In the 16th century, Libya became a Turkish possession, and so it remained until 1911, when ITALY invaded and annexed it. The Treaty of Oushy signed in October 1912 recognised its new ownership. In 1928, the extent of the province was greatly enlarged by the inclusion of various oases. Its present area is about 800,000 square miles, divided into two districts of TRIPOLITANIA and CYRENAICA. Beyond remembering the appalling cruelties inflicted by Graziani on the important indigenous tribe of the Senussi, and the building of the great coast-road by the Italians, the rest of Libyan history is extremely modern! "In a campaign of barely eight weeks which should long be studied as a model of military art, an advance of over 400 miles has been made. The whole Italian army in the East—an army reputed to exceed a hundred and fifty thousand men—has been captured or destroyed. The entire province of CYRENAICA, nearly as big as ENGLAND and WALES, has been conquered. EGYPT and the Suez Canal are safe and the port, base and air fields of BENGHAZI constitute a strategic point of high consequence to the whole war in the Eastern Mediterranean" (Mr. Churchill, 9–2–41). BARDIA, TOBRUK, DERNA and BENGHAZI have all fallen like houses of cards before the scientifically co-ordinated attack of the Imperial Army, the Royal Navy and the R. A. F.

In short, the Libyan campaign under General Wavell will stand out in history not only as a brilliant military exploit but as a model in the new science of modern warfare. Wherever, henceforward, extreme mobility, great distances, and clock-work co-ordination of the army with the air and naval arms, are factors in a campaign, 'Wavell's Show', in Libya must be quoted. Place-names none of us had heard of have become household words. SIDI BARRANI and SOLLUM (in EGYPT) and BARDIA, TOBRUK, DERNA and now BENGHAZI in LIBYA, are today famous landmarks in a triumphant adventure.

As a fitting climax to the brilliant story that began with the launching of the attack from MERSA MATRUH, Lieutenant-General Wilson has just been appointed the Military Governor of CYRENAICA, thus indicating that the victors have already established an administration over the occupied territory in accordance with international law. And now the second stage of the Libyan campaign has begun. Wavell's troops are marching towards TRIPOLI, and if it is very long before the district of TRIPOLITANIA is similarly overrun and occupied by the Imperial Army, we shall be surprised.

ERITREA.—This tract is the oldest Italian possession in North AFRICA, and has been a full-fledged Italian colony since 1889. It has two very fair ports on the Red Sea, MASSAWA and ASSAB and has, since 1934, been of considerable interest to British peoples because, if ever ITALY became an enemy, she would have a maritime lair on our Indian and Far Eastern highway, as well as the command of the approaches to the rich but disorderly country of ABYSSINIA. The fears of pessimists were abundantly justified!

It is of importance to note that the campaign in ERITREA was started primarily to engage and immobilise an Italian army of 200,000 strong in ERITREA and ABYSSINIA which could otherwise have proceeded to the help of Marshal Graziani in the north.

The enemy threat to EGYPT once eliminated, we could turn our attention to ERITREA, Italian SOMALILAND, and ABYSSINIA itself, from several different quarters. In the first week of January, British and South African troops in the desert between KENYA and ABYSSINIA overpowered the Italian border troops, and have been driving them inwards ever since. The British offensive in ERITREA is developing in two directions, towards MASSAWA from the north, and against ASSAB from the south. Earlier on 1st and 2nd of this month, AGORDAT and BARENTU situated on the railway to MASSAWA were captured, and the threat to the major of the two Italian ports, *via* CHEREN and ASMARA is now serious. Even as we go to press we are in a position to record that nearly half of ERITREA has been occupied by Imperial troops.

Incidentally it is of particular pleasure to record that in all the operations in LIBYA and ERITREA, **Indian troops have played a leading part and have been greatly complimented on their efficiency and valour.** A New Delhi communiqué of 3rd instant reveals how Indians

are taking to their task in East AFRICA. "Just like WAZIRISTAN" said a sepoy. "We are indeed playing on our home ground" commented an Indian Army Officer, and more of these cheery comments are likely to be elicited as the world-chorus of praise reaches the ears of our gallant sepoys!

ABYSSINIA.—We have no space to describe the earlier history of this country. Its inexcusable annexation by ITALY in 1935 is now bringing retribution upon the invaders' heads; and the jewel of the Fascist Empire is in process of being handed back to its rightful ruler and people.

On 26—11—40 Mr. R. A. F. Butler declared in the House of Commons that the British Government were anxious to see ETHIOPIA liberated from Italian aggression, to which end they were offering every assistance to Ethiopians who had taken up arms against the enemy. Since then much has happened. The result of the assistance so offered has been that over large areas in ABYSSINIA Italians now have no authority, and their control is confined to the towns and main roads—nor are these latter any too safe for them. The revolt that has smouldered ever since the Italian conquest five years ago is bursting into flames. In the sensible hope that such would be the case in July last a handful of British officers crossed the frontier and entered ABYSSINIA. With splendid patience and daring they trekked into the heart of the country with a convoy of arms, and established themselves in the interior, some 400 miles away from the frontier. They have since raised an army of Abyssinians and trained them in the use of modern arms, in addition to greatly heartening the scattered thousands who had not ceased to loathe Italian rule.

When the patriot revolt started openly in the middle of last month, Hailé Selassié, the Ethiopian Emperor, again entered his realm from the Sudan and is now leading his subjects against the Italians. Native chiefs and warriors are rallying to his standard. They are being supplied with all kinds of modern arms and equipment by BRITAIN and grateful messages have been received from them by the British Government. The rising is being greatly assisted by the failure of the Italians in the five years of their occupation to establish their authority outside the main centres. In large tracts of the country administration has had to be left to Abyssinians themselves, and few of these can have forgotten

THE DESTRUCTION BY BOMBS AND FIRE OF MANY OF ABYSSINIA'S CHURCHES AND PRIESTS. The inhabitants are intensely religious, and such characteristic Italian blunders have led to continuous sporadic resistance, which makes the task of the Imperial rescuers considerably easier.

In a recent message to *Reuter*, the Emperor stated, "I will tear down the figure of the wolf erected by the Italians in ADDIS-ABABA and in its place will reinstate a white marble statue of the Lion of Judah. My people know I am near by; the revolt is making headway, thanks to the whole-hearted support of the British Government. I will personally lead them to victory. It is the writing on the wall and the days of my former Italian ally who betrayed my country are numbered."

The Emperor has come very near to keeping his word; a triumphal re-entry cannot be long delayed. Italian colonists in all East AFRICA, and particularly in ABYSSINIA, are hastily seeking shelter in French SOMALILAND. The British Government have already offered assistance and safe conduct to Italian women and children, *if their evacuation is agreed to by Rome.* Such consent, of course, would be an admission of defeat. It has not yet been forthcoming, but up in the north the great Imperial Army has driven the invaders out of the SUDAN and most of the remaining Italian forces are being surrounded and hammered in ERITREA. ABYSSINIA is practically isolated from the east. Other British and Congonese (BELGIAN CONGO) troops are entering from the West; General Smuts declared at JOHANNESBERG on 11th January that the rôle of SOUTH AFRICA in 1941 will be to clear ABYSSINIA and SOMALILAND of the enemy, and on South and West his troops, with the British forces in KENYA are steadily carrying out his policy. The fate of the Italian rule in ABYSSINIA is thus sealed.

At this juncture, the British Foreign Secretary has lost no time in defining the British aims in helping Hailé Selassié to re-establish his throne. Mr. Eden, while promising every assistance and guidance in economic and political matters, has coupled the promise with an assurance that "the British Government have themselves no territorial ambitions in ABYSSINIA."

A near retrospect in AFRICA is thus very satisfactory; the prospect is no less so, **provided the Germans are also beaten.** Freedom and Progress are on their way to the African peoples; a dire threat to our own

country of INDIA is obliterated; the trade of the Empire will soon move freely to and fro from east to west on its lawful occasions. But **note the proviso. It is an important one.** Hitler and Hitlerism **must** be destroyed, and **no loyal man may relax until that has been accomplished.**

Meanwhile, a couple of quotations from Mr. Winston Churchill's speech of February 9th may fittingly close this paper,

> "With every month that passes, the many proud and once happy countries held down by brute force and vile intrigues are learning to hate the treacherous yoke of the Nazi (and | or Fascist) as nothing ever has been hated so fiercely and widely among men before."

and then—in words which he addressed to Mr. Roosevelt, **but which will apply to men of good-will the world over,**

> "Put your confidence in us. Give us your faith and your blessing and under Providence all will be well. We shall not fail or falter. We shall not weaken or tire. Neither the sudden shock of battle, nor the long-drawn trials of vigilance and exertion will wear us down. Give us the tools and we will finish the job."

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

6—2—41 to 12—2—41.

A BIRD'S EYEVIEW.

THE interest of the week centres mainly round the Mediterranean and is focussed on the doom towards which ITALY is irresistably drawing. The fall of BENGHAZI has brought the whole colony of CYRENAICA to the feet of a conqueror more experienced, liberal and just than fascist ITALY while the steady advance of the Imperial Forces in the numerous other parts of AFRICA, is throttling the life out of the ITALY's abused and ramshackle "empire." The naval bombardment of GENOA has struck ITALY a shrewd blow at home, while Greek progress in ALBANIA is overthrowing her last stand in that quarter.

Meanwhile war-clouds gather thickly in the BALKANS, and diplomacy is heading for a crisis at VICHY. The Hitlerian tiger writhing in the net of the British Blockade, crouches anew for a vicious spring. Whether it will be at the BALKANS, or GIBRALTAR, or BRITAIN, the next few weeks will show.

In the Far East, JAPAN, not satisfied with the róle of arbitrator, is trying to get a foothold in French INDO-CHINA and THAILAND, possibly for a leap upon the NETHERLANDS. Unperturbed by the gathering storm, and assured of help from across the Atlantic where the United States House of Representatives has passed the British Aid Bill, BRITAIN strikes and parries, and has already taken the initiative with great aerial sweeps over the so-called invasion bases.

THE FALL OF BENGHAZI.

BENGHAZI, the capital of the CYRENAICA, its most populous city and Marshal Graziani's former headquarters, surrendered on Thursday evening.

The operations that led to the capture constitute one of the most brilliant feats of arms in military history, amounting almost to wizardry. The rapidity of the advance is best dercribed as a leap. From the last post at DERNA, the distance was covered at 150 miles a day. BARCE was reached on Wednesday and BENGHAZI 60 miles to the west of BARCE surrendered the next evening after a 36 hour attack—a classic example of *Blitz*!

The fall of BENGHAZI 'inaugurates the funeral' of the Italian empire in AFRICA. CYRENAICA, its most important component, has been conquered in 'strategic fact, if not in terms of acres', and Lieut. General Sir Maitland Wilson has been already appointed as its military Governor. The menace to the Suez Canal and the Nile exists no longer. No longer on the defensive, BRITAIN can now assume the initiative in the Central and Western Mediterranean from four new points—BENGHAZI, CRETE, GREECE, and ALBANIA. On land, BENGHAZI stands at the head of a road and rail communication into the interior both of east and west LIBYA. BENGHAZI's harbours are deep enough for cruisers and merchantmen, though not for battleships. Near its extensive aerodromes stands BENINA, a sea-plane base.

Perhaps the most important result of the victory however, is the psychological effect upon friend and foe. The fear of a stalemate which possibly delayed the helping hand of AMERICA, need benumb her no longer; VICHY, and the BALKAN STATES whose faith has been wavering, in terror of the tyrant, have now good reason to shake off their fear; any German plan of forestalling BRITAIN in AFRICA by the seizure of TUNISIA stands frustrated.

ON TO TRIPOLI...... THE CAPTURE OF EL AGHELIA.

TRIPOLI, 400 miles away to the west, beckons the conqueror and General Wavell's army is already off, and having traversed a hundred and forty miles has occupied EL AGHELIA on the Gulf of Sidra. Before it lies 300 miles of desert but beyond the bringing up of supplies there are no particular military difficulties to surmount. TRIPOLI seems doomed.

THE AFRICAN CAMPAIGN.

Mr. Churchill's review of the campaign made in his broadcast of the 9th is a superb announcement of generous appreciation. He said:

'General Wavell, our able leader, and all the allied ardent men, British, Australian and Indian, of the Imperial Army saw their opportunity.

'At that time, I ventured to draw General Wavell's attention to the Gospel saying, mentioned in the seventh chapter of St. Mathew, where, as you all know or ought to know, it is written,

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

'The Army of the Nile has asked, and it was given. They sought, and they have found. They knocked, and it has been opened to them.

'In a campaign of barely eight weeks, which should long be studied as a model of military art, an advance of over 400 miles has been made.

The whole Italian army in the east—an army reputed to exceed 150,000 men—has been captured or destroyed.

The entire province of CYRENAICA, nearly as big as ENGLAND and WALES, has been conquered.'

ERITREA.

The Italian retreat from BARENTU which has been already reported in an earlier issue, has now degenerated into a rout towards ARREZA and ASMARA. CHEREN is being hemmed in. A new third offensive, a drive to the sea down the north-eastern corner of ERITREA from the SUDAN, has begun; and MERSA TAILAI and KAROTA on the way have already been captured.

ABYSSINIA.

The battle for ABYSSINIA is now well under way. The British advance on the GONDAR road and the Patriots' progress in the WALKOIT region continue. Crossing from KENYA, South African troops after a difficult march of 20 miles in 48 hours, captured GORAI and have now advanced 50 miles into ABYSSINIA.

Replying to a question in the House of Commons on the 4th Mr. Anthony Eden, Foreign Secretary, stated that BRITAIN would welcome the re-emergence of ETHIOPIA as an independent state under the rule of Hailé Selassié.

ITALIAN SOMALILAND.

The capture is reported of the important port of BELES GUGANI in Italian SOMALILAND.

ALBANIA.

TEPELENI, strategically well-situated in Central ALBANIA, has been evacuated, though the news of its actual fall is still awaited. In the northern sector, fighting centres round the mouth of the Skumbi river. Italian counter-attacks, made with great fury in the region west of the river Drin, have been repulsed.

BRITAIN has categorically denied the landing of any British troops in SALONIKA, whereas news continually arrives of German concentrations in RUMANIA and BULGARIA aimed probably at an attack on SALONIKA to estabish the Nazis in the rear of the Greek forces.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF GENOA.

Some weeks ago all ordinary traffic to GENOA by land was suspended and German movements were suspected to be aiming at the transport of troops thence to the African coast. But the naval bombardment of

GENOA on the 9th by the units of the Mediterranean fleet should have given the quietus to such ambitions. During the engagement 300 tons of shells were hurled into electricity, boiler, and harbour works, and oil installations. As usual the Italians have found an excuse for their inaction. The British victory was "favoured by a dense fog."

BATTLESHIP *versus* AIRCRAFT.

The British reply to the latest German boast of having established a Sicilian base for the *Luftwaffe* has been given in a recent order of the day by Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, admiral of the Mediterranean fleet, which said 'Italian or German, these pests must be shot out of the sky.' In obedience to the command, the Fleet has swept the sea for four days and not a plane has appeared.

BATTLESHIP *versus* SUBMARINE.

Recent German threats of intensified submarine warfare have opened the old controversy of the comparative merits of battleship and submarine. Inaugurating on the 8th the appointment of new Gauleiters, Rudolf Hess, Hitler's Deputy, told the world that the submarine war of which BRITAIN has had only a slight taste yet, would be intensified in spring. Fortunately this time the answer to the threat comes from another German source, the *Dresdener Neueste Nachrichten*, which has made the statement that the battleship is neither 'an expensive toy of the plutocracies nor Mr. Churchill's White Elephant, but the source of all sea-power which alone would give a State a voice in international councils.'

AIR-RAIDS.

In addition to air-attacks in support of the land and sea arms in the African and Albanian theatres the R. A. F. has this week continued its extensive daylight sweeps over the French bases, especially at BOULOGNE, DUNKIRK, CALAIS and OSTEND. DUSSELDORF, HANOVER, and BERLIN were also raided. But for spasmodic solo flights, attacks over BRITAIN were negligible.

JAPAN.

Portents in the Far East are somewhat disquieting. The head of the American Episcopal Church, with the knowledge of the American ambassador, has advised all Americans under his charge to secure their passports and be in readiness to leave.

Japanese arbitration in the THAI dispute seems to be a leisurely affair. The armistice has been extended for two more weeks to the end of February.

It is believed that Prince Vora Varu, leader of the THAI delegation at the Peace Conference at TOKYO, will be appointed THAI's first ambassador at JAPAN and that JAPAN will raise the status of its own legation at BANGKOK to an embassy.

Diplomatic efforts are reported to be in progress to secure friendly relations with RUSSIA as a preliminary to a drive southwards.

VICHY.

While armed legions are crossing swords in African and Albanian theatres, a war compounded of intrigue, threats and cajolery, is being carried on at VICHY. Pétain has openly disclaimed the Rassemblement National Populaire; Darlan has declared that the French Fleet will remain French; while General Weygand from across the Mediterranean has broadcast his loyalty to the old man at the head of the Vichy Government. As to the fate of "Franco-German collaboration", and "revision", (which means annulment of the Armistice terms and national dishonour involved by the surrender of the French fleets and ports,) the Stuttgart Radio has already spoken the word, "GERMANY will require securities from FRANCE and impose much more severe peace-terms."

Hence the hurryings and scurryings in FRANCE. Laval offered a Cabinet job and refusing it; Flandin accepting it and being sacked; Darlan nominated as Pétain's 'Successor', and mysterious railway journeys by Franco, Mussolini, Pétain, Suner and perhaps even the great Hitler! Time—the next few weeks perhaps—alone can solve the puzzle.

BALKAN PORTENTS.

Rumania.—A storm is brewing in the BALKANS. German experts to 'instruct' the Rumanians 'in the modern methods of warfare' have now become the nucleus of an expeditionary force, concentrated at strategic positions. The Rumanian Government has raised no objection to their numbers and objectives. The Nazis are on the Black Sea.

In these circumstances, there was nothing left for Sir Reginald Hoare, British Minister in RUMANIA but to ask for his passport. He will

be leaving in a day or two, by the first available boat. The Rumanian Legation in LONDON has also applied for passports.

Bulgaria.—The Nazi tentacles have also penetrated BULGARIA, probably with the acquiescence of its Government. Thousands of Germans have already entered the country in civilian clothes as 'tourists'. BULGARIA protests its innocence but Mr. Churchill's warning discounts its genuineness. 'Air fields are being occupied by German personnel. Many preparations have been made for a movement through BULGARIA; perhaps, the southward movement has already begun.'

It is now revealed that 'Free Rumanian Committee' to oppose General Antonescu and Nazism has been formed in LONDON and AMERICA. They have issued a four-fold programme (1) to free King Michael (2) to regain ceded territories (3) to set RUMANIA free and (4) to incorporate her in a new European order of Liberty.

BRITAIN.

Undisturbed by the storms brewing and raging around her, BRITAIN pursues her single-minded effort.

An exchange of messages between Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt strikes the keynote of British and American relations. To the President's poetic message,

> 'Sail on, O! Ship of State!
> Sail on, O! Union, strong and great!
> Humanity with all its fears,
> With all the hopes af future years,
> Is hanging breathless on thy fate!'

Mr. Churchill replied, in the peroration of a magnificent address to Parliament.

'Put your confidence in us. Give us your faith, and your blessing and under Providence, all will be well. We shall not fail or falter. We shall not weaken or tire. Neither the sudden shock of battle nor the long-drawn trials of vigilance and exertion will wear us down. *Give us the tools*, and *we will finish the job.*'

Part of Mr. Churchill's greatness lies in his unswerving realism, and daring vision. He warned the world that.

'This is a truly mortal struggle. Hitler took it more or less for granted that, when FRANCE surrendered, we should give in too, but we did not and he had to think again. Hitler will now be supported by much more equipment and apparatus, all planned and manufactured during the winter. We must be prepared to meet gas attacks, parachute attacks and glider attacks, with constancy, foresight and fortitude. He may carry heavy forces to the BALKAN STATES, tear great provinces out of RUSSIA, even march to the gates of INDIA. He may spread his curse more widely over EUROPE and ASIA, but it will not avert his doom.'

The daily expenditure of BRITAIN having grown to £ 12¼ millions, credits totalling £ 16,000 millions—the biggest expenditure so far on record in British history—was sanctioned by the House of Commons on the 6th to meet national expenditure up to April.

To carry out the Bevin Scheme, trades will be classified as essential and non-essential, with war industries, agriculture and export trade in the former category. Working hours, minimum payment rates and management will be controlled by Government.

AMERICA.

After a debate lasting 6 days the House of Representatives passed the British Aid Bill by 260 votes to 165 with a few minor amendments. It has now gone up to the Senate where it is unexpectedly being taken up at once. In the Foreign Relations Committee dissentient voices have been raised by Mr. Joseph Curren, President of the National Maritime Union and Senator Wheeler, the isolationists opposing the measure as 'downright Fascist.'

Mr. Harry Hopkins, Roosevelt's personal representative and Mr. Wendell Willkie have returned to AMERICA after a tour of BRITAIN, the former with an intimate knowledge of the internal situation gained after about a month's sojourn in political headquarters and the latter fully cognisant of the external situation after a week's whirlwind tour. Mr. Willkie's parting message—addressed to the Reich—is outspoken :

"I am of purely German descent. My family name is not Willkie but Willicke. My grand parents left GERMANY 90 years ago because they were protestants against autocracy. I too claim that. I am proud of my German blood but I hate aggression and tyranny. Tell the German people that we, American Germans, regret and hate the aggression and lust for power of the present German Government."

To Mr. Churchill's call to AMERICA, 'Give us tools and we will finish the job' Mr. Cordell Hull has fittingly replied promising 'fullest production, with the greatest possible speed to ensure the maximum military supplies.'

ENEMY OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

Norway.—The property of Crown Prince Olav has been confiscated.

Denmark.—Danish torpedo-boats have been manned by Germans and fly the erman flag, in violation of the original conditions of occupation.

Belgium.—During the invasion of BELGIUM the Belgian Government sent 260 million dollars worth of gold to FRANCE for safe custody. The Bank of FRANCE sent it to DAKAR, whence, under pressure, it has now been brought back and delivered to the Germans. The NEW YORK Supreme Court has attached the Bank of FRANCE Funds at NEW YORK for an equivalent amount. This is the first litigation relating to 'frozen assets.'

Poland.—All conquered territories, including POLAND, are required by the Germans to maintain an army of occupation, and thus pay for the continuance of their slavery. Thousands of the people of these countries, especially of POLAND, have been transported to GERMANY against their will, for labour corps. Young men and women are picked up in the streets by raiding lorries and carried away without their parents' knowledge. A German giving a cigarette to a Pole or treating him as an equal is a criminal.

ITALY.

Mr. Ronald Cross, British Minister of shipping, has refuted the Nazi propaganda that the British Navy has deprived South AMERICA of its market, and EUROPE of its food. He has shown that, while bread and food of good quality can be easily had in BERLIN, ITALY is being treated as a slave state, and supplied with coarse bread containing 50 per cent. of corn meal. EUROPE has enough food, if evenly distributed, and any shortage is due to German plundering, not to the British blockade. What conquered countries require is freedom, not bread.

R. A. F. Raids over GERMANY, GERMAN-occupied EUROPE, ITALY, ITALIAN AFRICA and ALBANIA.

Date.	Targets.	Allied aircraft & R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
3—2—41. (Monday).			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
NIGHT :—			
	The Docks and other military objectives at BREST.	...	Very heavy damage.
	Other objectives in North-west FRANCE.	1 plane.	Seriously damaged.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	BERKA Aerodrome at BENGHAZI ...	...	Large fires started.
	The railway station and motor transport on the roads at BARCE.	...	Motor lorries destroyed.
	Troops withdrawing along the road between SLONTA and TEENIS.	...	Heavy casualties.
	Supporting the army's advance in ERITREA.	...	1 plane destroyed.
	Aerodromes and buildings at GURA ...	1 plane.	...
	GOBWEN Aerodrome in KENYA ...	No loss.	5 planes.
4—2--41. (Tuesday.)			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
NIGHT :—			
	Docks and Repair yards at CHERBOURG.	...	Smashed.
	Occupied French ports at BREST, DUNKIRK, DIEPPE and OSTEND.	...	Fires and explosions started.
	Aerodromes at VANNES and other places in occupied FRANCE.	...	Damaged.
	Two railway junctions and a train at DUSSELDORF.	4 planes.	Huge fires started.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Motor transport between MARAUA and BARCE.	...	Heavy loss.

Date.	Targets.	Allied aircraft & R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
4—2—41.	**(Tuesday.)**—*cont.*		
	ITALIAN AFRICA—*cont.*		
	The railway station at BARCE ...	...	The track hit.
	Aerodromes at BERKA and BENINA.	...	Hangers hit and fires started.
	Italian lines of communication at BENGHAZI.	...	...
	Patrol over the enemy territories ...	...	2 planes.
	An enemy flying-boat at TOLMETA ...	...	1 plane.
	Landing ground near AZOZA ...	...	5 planes set on fire.
	Aerial fight over ASMARA ...	...	2 planes.
	Aircraft on the ground at TERRANNI and BARENTU.	...	4 planes burnt, 3 planes damaged.
	Motor transport on the METEMMA-GONDAR Road and MOKALE.	...	3 machines destroyed and others damaged.
	A motor convoy between ASMARA and CHEREN.	...	...
	The Aerodrome at GURA ...	2 planes.	...
	ITALIAN DODECANESE.		
	MARITZA Aerodrome at RHODES ...	...	Damaged.
5—2—41.	**(Wednesday).**		
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
DAY :—			
	Aerodromes and ports in occupied FRANCE.	...	Severely damaged.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	BENINA Aerodrome near BENGHAZI and at BERKA.	...	...
	Railway station at BARCE ...	...	...
	Protecting the army on the various fronts in Italian East AFRICA.	...	...
	Aerial fight over BARENTU ...	...	2 planes captured; 1 plane shot down.
	Gun positions at CHEREN ...	...	...
	Motor transport at NEGASIT, BENGHAZI, BERKA and JEDABYA.	...	1 plane.
	Motor vehicles and buildings at DESSIE	...	Fires started.

Date.	Targets.	Allied aircraft & R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
6—2—41. **(Thursday.)**			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	The Docks and dock areas at DUNKIRK, DIEPPE, CALAIS, FECAMP and BOULOGNE.	...	Railways hit. Fires started. Ships also hit. Heavily damaged.
	Aerial fight at ASMARA ...	...	2 planes shot down.
	Aircraft on the ground and petrol dumps at BAHRDAR Aerodrome.	...	3 planes destroyed.
	Railway and military buildings at CHEREN.	...	...
	A transport yard at ASSAB ...	...	...
7—2—41. **(Friday.)**			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	Supply stores and other dock side buildings at BOULOGNE.	...	Fires started.
	Docks and shipping at DUNKIRK ...	...	Direct hits on ships.
	The docks at CALAIS and OSTEND ...	...	...
8—2—41. **(Saturday.)**			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	Enemy supply ships off the coast of Southern NORWAY.	...	...
	Industrial targets at MANNHEIM ...	...	...
	Military objectives at FLUSHING and ROTTERDAM.	...	...
	ALBANIA.		
	Patrol over enemy area ...	...	8 planes.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Enemy troops, Motor transport, Gun emplacements and other objectives in and around CHEREN.	...	Heavily damaged.
	An enemy camp at KARORA ...	...	Casualties heavy.
	Aircraft on the ground at ALOMATA...	...	8 planes destroyed.
	A camp near DANGHILA (south of Lake TSANA).	...	...

Date.	Targets.	Allied aircraft & R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
8—2—41. (Saturday.)—*cont.*			
	ITALIAN AFRICA—*cont.*		
	Hangars and buildings at DESSIE ...	1 plane	...
	Sea-plane base at TRIPOLI ...	...	Hangars set on fire.
9—2—41. (Sunday.)			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	The Docks at ANTWERP ...	...	...
	Other objectives in the enemy occupied territory.	...	...
	Enemy destroyers off the NORWEGIAN coast.	1 plane	Enemy vessel hit.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Stores and motor transport at CHEREN	...	...
	Aerial fight over ASMARA ...	...	1 plane shot down; several others damaged.
	ASMARA, BADANA, AFMADU and the **Fort of TODENYNG.**	...	...
	ALBANIA.		
	Aerial fight over KLISSURA ...	...	4 planes destroyed.
	Aerial fight over KELCYRE ...	1 plane	4 planes shot down and several damaged.

Enemy Raids over BRITAIN, BRITISH Territories, GREECE and ALBANIA (under Greek occupation).

Date.	Targets.	Enemy aircraft losses.	R. A. F. & Allied aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
4—2—41. (Tuesday).			
	BRITAIN.		
	MORNING :—		
	An East ANGLIAN **town** ...	1 plane.	Some buildings damaged.
	SUFFOLK coast and KENT ...	1 plane.	Little damage.

Date.	Targets.	Enemy aircraft losses.	R. A. F. & Allied aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
4—2—41. (Tuesday)—*cont.*			
	BRITAIN—*cont.*		
	AFTERNOON :—		
	THAMES ESTUARY and KENT coast.	2 planes.	...
	NIGHT :—		
	Eastern part of country and the East MIDLANDS.	...	A few fires started but soon put out. A few casualties.
	MEDITERRANEAN.		
	MALTA	3 planes.	Only slight damage.
5—2—41. (Wednesday).			
	BRITAIN.		
	DAY :—		
	A convoy off the South-east coast of ENGLAND; **a point** in North-east	3 planes.	...
	SCOTLAND and **a place** in KENT ...	1 plane.	No damage.
	NIGHT :—		
	East and South-east ENGLAND ...	...	A few casualties.
6—2—41. (Thursday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
	No air activity anywhere over BRITAIN	...	...
7—2—41. (Friday).			
	BRITAIN.		
	No air raid the whole of the day ...	...	...
	MEDITERRANEAN.		
	MALTA (2 raids) ...	...	Civilian property damaged.
8—2—41. (Saturday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
	DAY :—		
	South-west coast; South-east coast; East coast.	3 planes.	No damage.
	NIGHT :—		
	No enemy air activity ...	...	...

Date.	Targets.	Enemy aircraft losses.	R. A. F. & Allied aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
9—2—41. (Sunday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	A British convoy in the NORTH SEA.	1 plane.	No damage at all.
NIGHT :—			
	EAST ANGLIA, ESSEX, the HOME COUNTIES and the West of SCOTLAND.	...	Little damage and a few casualties.
10—2—41. (Monday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
NIGHT :—			
	East and South-east ENGLAND ...	...	Very little damage and very few casualties.

SIDE LIGHTS.

Contrasts. A man called Hitler spoke recently in BERLIN. "I talked as much as any human being can" he thundered, in adulation or excuse of his many previous orations—but he did not say much that was new to non-German ears in his latest torrent of rhetoric ; he had actually to fall back on his own stale phrases and similes ; and the amount of wilful misrepresentation of facts, not mere interpretations of history, he indulged in must have made many a good German blush. Yet he is sometimes accounted one of the world's leading orators !

Ten days later the British Premier also addressed his people, and the world. Surely no one who heard the speech which I heard on the radio this morning, can deny that this was oratory as opposed to rhetoric, careful yet sonorous selection of the exact phrase as opposed to frothy demagogy, quiet, dignified scorn as against bitter invective, cautious reasoned confidence against exaggerated, false-ringing optimism.

The whole plane of Mr. Churchill's statement was lofty ; he did not rant or shout ; yet he gave at least one of his hearer's one of those infrequent thrills which are caused only when one is deeply affected intellectually as well as emotionally. Even that great man and great speaker, Mr. Roosevelt, will surely say of BRITAIN's Premier, "The hour has produced the man."

Let there be light! Thirty minutes of such elucidation of the world position is worth three weeks of careful newspaper reading! Not that Mr. Churchill corrected many deductions, or broached many secrets. He merely clarified the atmosphere, quite inimitably, and while the Empire and AMERICA must feel that they have been given a draught of champagne, the taste that the speech will leave on Totalitarian palates must indeed be wry! It is curious to feel almost elated about some of the Premier's inspired prognostications, yet one does, even over such items as these :—

(*a*) BULGARIA is almost in the toils. She will inevitably be engulfed unless the people there—not the mesmerised politicians—listen to Mr. Churchill's most solemn appeal.

(*b*) BRITAIN being Hitlers's principal foe MUST, sooner or later, be struck at with all the might of Nazidom—and, endorsing Sir John Dill's broadcast, the Premier hinted that it would probably be 'sooner.'

(*c*) GERMANY is well aware that supplies from AMERICA are not only valuable but vital to us, and that therefore from NORWAY and from FRANCE, Hitler's aerial and submarine weapons, perfected and multiplied in the winter lull, must be turned against our shipping with increasing violence, and

(*d*) that, summing up, the great victories in AFRICA, the masterful career of our fleets, the air victories over BRITAIN last autumn, and the glorious renaissance of GREECE, are merely preludes to the most costly, bitter and vital struggle that man's mind has yet been able to conceive.

The dominant facts. Here are some of the facts that enabled Mr. Churchill to face the oncoming storm with such infectious confidence.

(*a*) There are now substantial proofs that Hitler did actually intend to invade BRITAIN last autumn, that he did try, and that he was beaten. The command of the sea was not his, and his attempt to command the air was completely frustrated by a very much smaller air force.

(*b*) That command of the sea has been frequently exhibited since, and is as indisputable as ever to-day ("Our Navy is more powerful, our flotillas more numerous") while he went so far to say (an opinion he has never before ventured) that BRITAIN now "commands the daylight air," (though presumably the night-bomber still has to be effectively countered).

(*c*) Has the longed-for 'parity of numbers' been achieved? It looks something like it. If so, proved superiority in personnel, in reserves of personnel, and in mechanical design, must be even more decisive than before. In truth, "another heavy weight has entered the ring."

(*d*) The Home Guard is no longer a collection of half-armed amateurs. They are an army of defence, highly-trained, adequately-equipped and nearly a million and three-quarters strong. With two million professional soldiers to work with, they will be a tough nut for Hun invaders to crack.

(*e*) The food position in ENGLAND gives no cause for anxiety and the national health is surprisingly excellent.

(*f*) The African Empire of ITALY is "irretrievably broken". Within a short time, therefore, many of the resources of a proved and victorious Army and Air Force will be available for use against other enemies.

(*g*) Mr. Churchill was able to say, definitely, that he could not see the need for American armed forces to help us through the ordeal. Ships we want, and machinery and munitions, in enormous quantities. "Give us the tools" he appealed to President Roosevelt "and we will finish the job" and those who heard his voice utter that word 'finish', can well take fresh heart, because, with the recent House of Representatives vote on the Lease and Lend Bill, who can still doubt that those 'tools' will be abundantly forthcoming?

But............! As we emphasised last week in this column, on no account can we afford to sit back—especially here in INDIA. Speaking of the great German preparations in South East EUROPE, of the collapse of RUMANIA (whence we are to withdraw our Minister on the day we publish this paper) of the 'peaceful' penetration and doubtful staunchness of BULGARIA, the Premier actually mentioned INDIA as being by no means out of danger.

He did not actually mention those explosive 'jack-in-a-box' 's in the Far East, the Japanese. They are fed up with stale-mate in CHINA, and are certainly up to no good just outside our eastern door, SINGAPORE. Hitler didn't make the Tripartite Pact for nothing, and when it suits him, is quite likely to push JAPAN over the edge into open war against us, whether it means complete ruin for them or not.

No, EFFORT is still to be our motto—increased effort, in the factories, in the fields, in public and private generosity, in sympathy, loyalty, and cohesion.

Face-losing. Despite the bragging of their militarists, not all the Japanese like the outlook. When Mr. Matsuoko had to beg AMERICA to regard the situation with "truly God-fearing piety" it was a sign of most unusual embarrassment in an unusually 'hard-baked' people, (their envied poise and polish notwithstanding). The Triple Pact has put them in this unenviable hole. After the fall of FRANCE, Japanese statesmen thought that GERMANY was undoubtedly

the horse to back. They were to be handed by GERMANY a Pacific and East Indian Empire, in return for an intransigeance towards AMERICA that was to put a brake on that 'arsenal's' supplies to BRITAIN.

These are the stories in the house of cards which they constructed.

(*a*) The transfer of 'expansionism' from CHINA to the South and South-west, leaving Mr. Wang Ching Wei's puppet administration to represent JAPAN'S successful closure of the "China Incident".

(*b*) MANCHUKUO interests to be safeguarded for JAPAN by a pact with RUSSIA, and British aid to CHINA to be stymied by threats to HONG KONG and SINGAPORE.

(*c*) A drive, peaceful at first, but forceful if necessary, for the oil and other useful products of INDO-CHINA, SIAM and N. E. I.

Actuals *v.* Estimates. We take (*c*) above first, as being the only piece of the jigsaw which partially fitted in. JAPAN has gained some important advantages in INDO-CHINA, commercially and strategically. She also got some oil from the Dutch East Indies—but it was mainly crude oil, instead of high-grade aviation spirit.

On the other side of the ledger however are some pretty heavy debit items.

(*a*) The withdrawal from South-East CHINA and NANKING has seriously weakened Japanese prestige, and Chiang Kai Shek is as strong as ever in CHUNGKING.

(*b*) The whole move has necessitated explanations in the Diet, and the admitted losses of a million troops in CHINA, and the revelation by Gen. Toyo that Chiang has at least 2,000,000 troops and 200 aeroplanes, did not please the public.

(*c*) The Russian pact hangs fire, so much so that RUSSIA at once announced that her aid to CHINA would continue, and followed it up with a barter-agreement.

(*d*) GREAT BRITAIN failed to collapse.

(*e*) American reaction has been exactly the opposite of what JAPAN and the Germans expected. Supplies are being multiplied and expedited to BRITAIN, CHINA has been given a loan, and JAPAN has been told diplomatically and in the newspapers, exactly where she gets off.

(*f*) JAPAN'S internal situation has seriously deteriorated. The 'incident' has cost her a million casualties, and a million and a half men locked up in CHINA. Trade with EUROPE is sadly handicapped by the blockade. BRITAIN and the U. S. A. have imposed embargoes on vital supplies. Even economies

like one meal (of rice !) a day, no 'perms' for women, and no tobacco for men, has failed to eliminate food queues in the shops and a budget that is 12,000 million yen against the 3,000 million of peace time.

The Nazi and the Fascist. It seems more than likely that Hitler let Mussolini get right into the soup, very deliberately, before coming to his aid. When he comes, it is rather a different kind of help he brings to that which BRITAIN and FRANCE gave ITALY after CAPORETTO ! What with Dr. Clodious, as head of numbers of 'economic missions', in addition to 'unity of command' to be arranged by putting German officers in charge of all kinds of Italian war departments, it looks suspiciously like the ultimate 'taking over' of the country!

Well, he's welcome to it ! He's had enough trouble with a *conquered* France ! Here he proposes to take charge of a "great ally"–only unfortunately it has a régime of proved incompetence and unpopularity, it is minus 78% of its normal imports and has a suppressed populace who loathe the Germans almost as much as they loathe the Blackshirts !

Enemy "wind-up"! We break our rule of only printing original stuff in this column, for the following interesting transcript.

American newspapers naturally obtain more news from GERMANY and Occupied EUROPE than any others, though many of their telegrams are heavily censored by the German authorities, who do not want too much of the truth about their affairs to be known to the rest of the world.

Unfortunately for them, the PARIS correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune* managed to get through an uncensored message. It read : "The entry to the full of American aid in this war **is a supreme nightmare. The German people fear it because it will ensure the eventual loss of the struggle, revolution in their homeland and a flare-up in every country over which Germany has planted her boot**...........I hear German soldiers talking quietly among themselves in café corners...........They say it must be finished before next summer so that they can go home. They say AMERICA must not mix in this, and that last time it was the material they sent overseas that turned the scale. *Lieber Gott in Himmel* (Good God in Heaven !) if AMERICA should do it again !"

PRESENT CONDITIONS IN FRANCE.

[The following extracts from ***King-Hall Newsletter*** *No. 237, dated January 23 have been received by cable from London].*

WE publish below some information about conditions in France. This information has come to us from several different sources in the occupied and unoccupied zones. We believe it to be reliable.

Portrait of a leader.

Both France and German circles in Paris are convinced that the people who have been saying that Marshal Petain is a weak, woolly headed old man, have made a profound mistake. On the contrary, while the Marshal may be vain, **he is an extremely determined and hard-headed old gentleman whom the Nazis have tried vainly to move by every type of blandishment, threat and intrigue.** He may be clinging to ideas that belong to the past which will never return, but he will face any opposition to carry out to the letter the terms of the agreement concluded after the French capitulation. The Nazis have tried their old tricks of using that agreement as a thin end of the wedge to force new and far greater concessions from the Vichy Government. In this they have found themselves up against a very obstinate person with a high sense of honour according to his own lights.

Informed observers both in Paris and in Vichy take it for granted that **Weygand's presence in Africa is a card which the Marshal still holds between himself and the Germans** and it might be used with considerable effect should Hitler decide to insist on the use of the French fleet and the Mediterranean bases or on any other form of French participation in the Nazi struggle against Britain. There is a good deal of satisfaction in both sections of France at the recent outburst in the Nazi Press over the decision of the Vichy Government to **keep the armies of French Africa intact and at the tours of inspection which Weygand has been making** throughout the Colonies with rather more publicity than might have been given to the matter.

The ordinary man.

Our informants are all agreed on one point particularly ; **the people of France have had enough of war** and in their present mood have no intention of being drawn into further struggles. It is difficult to realise how completely the spirit of the French nation has been broken. That spirit will not be re-created without a considerable passage of time, and in the meantime the French people will put up with a very great deal without being moved to participate in the war.

The Colonies are regarded as the last shred of her former glory and power remaining to France. But if the Colonies were to be threatened by the Nazis or the Fascists, they would have to depend very largely on their own power of resistance. It is conceivable that the French fleet might be sent to their aid, but it is doubtful if very much assistance other than this could or would be given by the people of France.

Feelings about the Italians.

The British victories against the Italians in Libya have caused much rejoicing among the French, first, because they welcome any blow struck against the Italians for whom they have never had much regard and whom they have despised since the Fascist stab in the back last June, and secondly because the defeat of the Italian armies in North Africa has removed any immediate threat to Tunisia and Algeria. In Syria and Jibuti the Vichy Government have had difficulty, particularly since the British offensive was launched against the Libyan armies, in restraining the population from anti-Italian demonstrations which would have been unseemly in view of France's position *vis-a-vis* the Axis Powers.

Feelings about the British.

Feeling towards Britain has shown a great change since the capitulation last June. At that time it was felt that the defeat of Britain was inevitable and would not be long delayed. When that expectation was not realised, there was great surprise, and in some quarters resentment, that Britain should have escaped the humiliation which had overtaken France. But as the Nazis' air attacks were beaten off by the R. A. F. and the elaborate preparations for invasion came to naught, **a new spirit began to take hold of the French. Since that time pro-British feeling has grown, especially in Northern France,** and more and more French people have dared to hope for a British victory, which would bring in its train the possibilities of a re-birth of France. But that is a very different thing from again taking up arms in the common cause.

Economics of occupation.

The economic situation in Occupied France varies greatly in different areas. There is much unemployment, but the factories in which the Nazis have been interested are again running, often under German direction, and in some cases, producing a greater volume of goods than was the case a year ago. In the industries which are producing goods for Germany, such as the Renault and Citroen plants, workers have received wage increases up to 25 per cent. There is little effect of sabotage—probably less than in any other occupied territory.

Ingrâtiation !

When the Germans occupied Paris, the Parisians expected a reign of terror. They were astonished to discover that the behaviour of German troops was very correct. During the early months, the forces of occupation in the Capital, made up largely of Austrians, succeeded in fraternising to a considerable extent with the Parisians, "They are not bad", the French used to say of them. As the autumn months passed, troops from other parts of Germany became more numerous and their behaviour was less friendly.

Great attention seems to have been paid to supplying German troops with newspapers which were distributed throughout Occupied France within a couple of days of their publication. Great efforts are also made to supply the Germans with papers from their native town or district in Germany. These invariably contain carefully chosen inconspicuous Nazi propaganda intended to raise the confidence of the troops. Their line was that everything was fine at home and that there would be all sorts of social improvements when the final victory had been gained ; then everyone in Germany would have a "People's Car", holidays by the sea side and so on. The general impression created in France is that the German soldier of to-day is a willing and efficient instrument in the hands of Nazi leaders but not in the Nazi party sense. Numerous cases have been known of former French Socialists (including persons obviously Jewish) who, when stopped by German soldiers and found to have papers from the French Labour Service, were given cigarettes and money by the soldiers and even lifts in their lorries ; often they were warned " Beware. S. S. and Gestapo. Get out before they come."

The invaders have made great efforts in those areas where they are anxious to get production going again to placate the French working people. For instance, in Nantes the Germans bought fruit and chocolates which they gave the inhabitants. In Poitiers, where there is a shortage of butter, they gave out packets of butter and in parts of Brittany cigarettes and jams from captured British stores.

The Nazis made great use of the fact that many of the French Trade Union officials had fled to safety abroad. Many of those disappeared and the story was put about that they were arrested " while fleeing to England ". The main theme of Nazi propaganda among the workers was that National Socialism meant " Socialism of action ". This propaganda has not entirely been unsuccessful among working people in Occupied France. As the autumn months passed, **the Communists became more and more active**, but it has been difficult for observers to make up their minds exactly what their policy has been among the French workers. In some cases they have

appeared to be sponsoring collaboration with the Nazis, **but more generally they seem to have been endeavouring to stir up anti-Nazi feeling and to retard the production of those goods which Germany is securing from factories in Occupied France.**

The Germans have made things as difficult as they could for the Vichy Administration and have exploited many great problems which have confronted Petain and his Cabinet. For instance, at one time negotiations went on for weeks to get permission to send several train loads of wine to Paris, where there is no wine. This delay was caused entirely by the Nazis and was exploited by German propaganda and attributed to the inefficiency of the Vichy Government.

SHIFTING THE AIR FRONTIER.
SIGN OF R. A. F'S GROWING STRENGTH.
PREPARING FOR THE OFFENSIVE.
LONG TERM PLANNING JUSTIFIED.

The Daily Telegraph Air Correspondent writes:—

THE Royal Air Force is now engaged on the gigantic task of shifting the air frontier. That,and nothing less, is the meaning of the remarkable operations which British aircraft have been undertaking in the last few days.

We can take and hold the offense. **By day and by night, the enemy must now expect a hammering from the air such as no nation in history has ever had to withstand.** With every fresh assault the air frontier will be pushed farther and farther over and into Germany.

In August and September the Royal Air Force, owing to its numerical inferiority to the enemy, was on the defensive. It was fighting against odds to preserve these islands against the invading air forces.

It was fighting most of the time over this country. Only at night was it able to strike back and assume the offensive.

Now the position is different. From being over the south coast and even over London, the **air frontier is being shifted to the coast of France and to German bases beyond it.**

It is the clearest and most positive sign of growing air strength. It is the recapture of the offensive in the air such as the Royal Flying Corps maintained almost throughout the war of 1914—18.

Then, it was the exception for an enemy aeroplane to be shot down over friendly country. Nearly all the British victories were achieved far over the other side.

In August and September last year enemy machines were falling in hundreds on British soil, a sign of tactical superiority, but at the same time a sign that the enemy was on the offensive and we on the defensive. Now enemy machines will be falling on Germany and German-occupied country.

We shall lose more heavily. That is almost certain and must be accepted as the price of a sustained air offensive. But the total effect on the German war effort will be far more markedly in our favour than any successes in defensive operations.

We shall employ technical superiority even greater than we enjoyed last year against the enemy and numbers which approach, and will soon exceed, his own. Already the pressure on our reserve is great. And it is steadily mounting.

We shall not follow the German example of trying to take the offensive and of then being beaten and forced to abandon it. When once we start, the Germans will know no respite, except such as comes to them through the intervention of the weather. We shall not cease, but shall continue on a steadily increasing scale.

We shall gain ground in the air as troops gain ground on the ground by defeating the enemy tactically in every encounter.

A great problem of planning confronts the Air Staff in instituting this offensive. But it is the thing to which Air Chief Sir Charles Portal, Chief of Air Staff, has been looking forward for months. He will use every ingenuity and every strategem to gain our objectives with the smallest possible loss.

There will be an interesting secondary effect when the offensive reaches its peak. German night raiders will work less often and in diminishing strength. At least the real answer to enemy night raiders emerges in a sustained, mounting and systematic aerial offensive.

COMFORTS FOR INDIAN SOLDIERS AND SEAMEN.

WORK OF THE INDIA HOUSE FUND.

HOW MEN WERE HELPED AFTER DUNKIRK.

by

Clive Rattigan, London.

THERE is a big human story to be told about the work of the India House Comforts Fund of Indian soldiers and seamen.

Think, for instance, what it has meant for wounded or sick Indian soldiers and seamen lying in British hospitals to receive visits from their own countrymen and women and English people able to converse with them in their own language, to write letters for them to their relative in their homeland, to bring them news of happenings in India and to provide them with plentiful supplies of cigarettes and other " comforts ".

All these men have been exceedingly well looked after in the various hospitals to which they have been taken—at Greenwich, at Guildford, in the Harefield Sanatorium and the Atkinson Morley Convalescent Home; but the Fund's hospitals visiting scheme has furnished just that "touch of Home" which would otherwise have been lacking.

HELP FOR INDIAN SEAMEN.

Then, too, consider the case of the Indian seamen whose ships have been sunk by enemy action or who have been released from internment in Germany. All these men had lost their personal possessions and were provided out of the fund with complete outfits of underwear, pullovers, scarves, socks, blankets and overcoats.

But the Fund has not been utilised solely for the relief of exceptional cases of hardship. It has been the endeavour of those responsible for its administration to assist all Indian seamen serving in the British Mercantile Marine. That this is a really large order may be appreciated from the fact that it is estimated that over 40,000 Indian seamen land in British ports in war-time every year. The India House Committee work in close co-operation with the Merchant Navy Comforts Service, through which parcels containing socks, shirts, pullovers, mufflers, singlets and gloves are sent weekly to be distributed to ships' crews.

SKIPPER'S LETTER

As an example of the appreciation of these comforts one may quote one of numerous letters of thanks the Secretary of the Fund has received. It is from the Master of the *City of Christchurch* and reads:—

"This morning your bales of splendid and very welcome gifts came on board and I do not know how to thank you sufficiently for them. I have just watched the distribution of the woollies to my Indian crew and if the ladies who made them could only have seen their faces, I am sure they would have felt well repaid for all their trouble. The Head Serang cautiously asked me 'How much money' and when I said, 'Nothing', their faces simply beamed. Please convey to every one connected with your service how much we all appreciate your kindness in sending us such splendid gifts and the crew also wish me to send their *salaams* to you all."

And here is another extract from a ship captain's letter:—

"I wish particularly to express my deep appreciation of the promptitude with which you arranged to send the comforts for my large Lascar personnel. I thought when so many were mentioned that we should be fortunate if only a few were equipped, and little thought that the following morning would find enough to ensure that every man was made comfortable for the voyage. They themselves are like children, quite unable to express their surprised appreciation at being thought of in this splendid way, and among my Officers and myself there is the knowledge that we shall have a cheerful, willing crew on the voyage."

NEEDS OF TROOPS.

So far as Indian troops are concerned the record has equally been one of valuable, well-directed and much appreciated service. For the Indian Pioneer Corps stationed "somewhere in England" the Fund has provided games equipment, newspapers, gramophones and cigarettes.

The needs of this Corps have necessarily been far less than those of the Indian Mule Transport Contingent which saw service in France and lost much of its equipment there. When the Contingent first landed in France it encountered a spell of bitter weather and to meet this situation the Indian Comforts Fund sent over to the Contingent plentiful supplies of pullovers, mufflers, helmets, gloves, socks and cap-comforters. Later the men were furnished with razors, soap, towels, games, magazines, gramophones and gramophone records and cigarettes. Then after Dunkirk the Fund once more helped by making good much of their losses in private possessions and equipment. And this kindly interest in the Contingent continues.

The Fund came into existence at the end of 1939. At the instance of the High Commissioner for India, Sir Firozkhan Noon, a Council and an Executive Committee were formed under the chairmanship of the Dowager Viscountess Chelmsford. Both bodies include distinguished Indians resident in England. The Hon. Treasurer is Mr. Charles Waddington and the Secretary Lady Chelmsford's daughter, the Hon. Mrs. John Monck.

The Fund depends on contributions from the Viceroy's War Purposes Fund and private donations. Generous assistance has also been received from English firms with interests in India, and from Indian firms in England. The actual amount of money so far available has not been very large, running to only a few thousand pounds. But the best possible use has been made of it, administrative expenses being kept down. In addition to numerous gifts from individuals and institutions, the India House Committee is helped by working parties both in England and in India. In India House a working party of Indian ladies meets weekly.

SIGNIFICANCE OF GERMAN ENTRY INTO ITALY.

POSSIBLE ATTEMPT TO DIVERT GREEK PRESSURE.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NAZI AND FASCIST PRESS.

*The Diplomatic Correspondent of the **Daily Telegraph** writes :—*

THE transfer to Italy of certain elements of the German Air Force probably has a dual significance. It reflects Hitler's statement, made to the Reichstag early last year, that Nazi Germany knew the fate awaiting her should any power overwhelm Fascist Italy. **Mussolini's reverses have produced a situation in which Fascist Italy might collapse.**

Hitler is probably determined for various reasons that this must not happen. He is equally determined in saving Italy to take over for himself such parts as he requires to provide Germany with a broad window on to the Central Mediterranean.

I reported some weeks ago the presence at Foggia, in Southern Italy, of a considerable number of German military forces. At that time it was probably true to say that these were primarily technicians and advance elements on which much larger concentrations could be formed.

There seems to be no good reason to doubt recent reports that the main bodies now have been despatched from Germany. Reliable correspondents have stated that several divisions have passed through the Brenner.

It is obvious that German air bases have been established in Sicily to try to hamper the British operations in Libya and the convoying of British supplies to Greece.

BALKAN DIVERSION.

At the same time the Germans massed in Rumania can be used either to intensify political pressure on the Balkans or on Russia, or to provide a fast moving column designed to occupy important coastal positions in Macedonia and Thrace.

Hitler may calculate that such an operation would compel Greece to transfer the bulk of her forces from the Albanian front to meet the new threat. It seems probable that such a move would have to be made *via* Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. **The present indications are that both those countries would resist and Turkey would immediately become involved.**

The Ankara radio, quoting certain Italian diplomatic circles, states that **Italy does not intend to declare war on the United States if America becomes involved in hostilities with Germany.**

It is also stated that there exists a cleavage of opinion between the German and the Italian press on American aid to Britain. While the German Press expresses the view that the United States will be too late to save Britain from defeat, the Italian Press does not seem to be so sure.

"The disastrous defeats suffered by the Italians in Albania and North Africa," it comments, "seem to be bringing the Italian papers to their senses". It is at any rate significant that the Italian papers should have admitted the "excellence of the British arms and the great gallantry of the British troops."

The Ankara radio also warns people against easy acceptance of the denials of the presence of German troops in Bulgaria. An invasion might be started because of the Italian weakness and the possibility of her collapse, the British victories in the African campaign, the acquisition by Britain of valuable bases in the Mediterranean or the possibility that Britain will fortify islands in the Aegean which would establish her irremovably in the Near East.

DIPLOMATIC BATTLE CENTRING ON BULGARIA.

TURKISH, RUSSIAN AND U. S. SUPPORT FOR KING BORIS.

COLONEL DONOVAN'S ACTIVITIES.

*The Special Correspondent of the **Daily Mail** in Sofia cables :—*

BULGARIA is now the centre of a diplomatic battle in which King Boris, with the diplomatic support from Russia, Turkey and the United States, is firmly resisting fierce pressure from Hitler.

Hitler wants Bulgaria to allow German troops through from Rumania to stab Greece in the back. King Boris maintains a determined "No".

On the outcome of this diplomatic battle may depend Hitler's hopes of sending help to Mussolini in time to save Italy from collapse.

There is little doubt that Germany had planned to send powerful forces through Bulgaria to Greece to establish a base on Salonika.

In this way she would not only have stabbed Greece in the back and relieved the pressure in Albania on Italy, but also she would have secured a port for the dispatch of large bodies of men and material to the assistance of the Italian forces in Libya.

But this plan has encountered many unexpected difficulties.

One has been King Boris's fight to preserve his country's neutrality.

Another has been the array of diplomatic support which has enabled King Boris to maintain his refusal to allow a free passage for German troops through his country.

Russia, for instance, is reported to have insisted upon the addition of a secret clause to the recently-signed Russo-German Trade Agreement insisting that Bulgaria must be left untouched; the Turks have made it clear that they would regard the invasion of Bulgaria as an act of war.

Lastly, Col. Donovan, who is investigating conditions in Europe for Washington, has arrived at Sofia with a special message from President Roosevelt to King Boris.

This has provided fresh support from an unexpected quarter.

Germany's alternative route into Greece via Yugoslavia remains, but there are circumstantial reports that the Serbs would fight rather than allow it.

Accordingly orders to troops in Rumania to march have once again been postponed.

It is vital therefore for Hitler to try to obtain Bulgaria's permission for an unopposed passage for German troops.

If he could obtain this, Turkey would be placed in the position of an aggressor if she were to march into Bulgaria to bar their passage.

The German Minister here has therefore during the past 48 hours put upon King Boris every known method of applying pressure—from threats to promises.

But against him are arrayed the diplomatic forces of Turkey, Russia and America.

Col. Donovan is wasting very little time. He saw M. Popoff, Bulgarian Foreign Minister, on the 21st morning. He saw the Premier, M. Filoff, in the afternoon.

It is almost certain that he will have had an interview with King Boris before leaving Sofia for Belgrade.

Examples of Misleading Statements in Enemy Broadcasts to India and the Near East for the period January 27—February 3, 1941.

A.—BROADCASTS IN ENGLISH.

WHO BEGAN IT?

The nightmare of Germany's defeat in the last war is ever present in German minds, and Hitler invariably harks back to it.

WHO LOST IT?

In dealing with 1918, Hitler made a slip, remarkable when one remembers how many times he has played this part. Early in his speech he referred to the "**political, moral and military collapse of Germany**", and later had to correct himself with the familiar slogan: "**We were never defeated in the last war.**"

The simple truth is that **Germany, in 1918, was defeated in the field**. Weakened by their losses in 1916 and 1917, the Germans lost during the final "Battles of the Hundred Days" at least one-quarter of their remaining troops by capture or desertion, and another quarter in killed or wounded; strategically, they had been driven back behind their last prepared line of defence, and had been so out-manoeuvred that their line of retreat was cut in two by the Ardennes and their lateral communications hopelessly blocked. **They submitted to an Armistice in order to avoid complete annihilation.** The naval mutinies, the military revolts and the revolution at home came *after* and not *before*, the defeat of the German Army in the field.

WHERE IS THE RESTRAINT?

But there is always the fettered German Press to fall back upon, and the Berlin radio says that the *Berliner Boersenzeitung* "contrasts the quiet and restrained assurance of the Fuehrer that he is going to win this war with the unconvincing and superficial official optimism of his adversaries."

But the free world well knows that Hitler's pronouncements have always been far from quiet and restraint. He boasted that Britain would not fight on, once France was conquered; he promised the German people that British bombs would never fall on their cities; he boasted that he would be in London in September of last year; he promised peace by Christmas. **None of these boasts and promises—only few of many he has made—have been fulfilled.**

BROTHERLY LOVE.

Berlin radio, reporting the "warm recognition in the Italian press" of the eighth anniversary of Hitler's accession to power, says that the Italian papers "write of the intimate material and spiritual relations between the German and Italian peoples."

Last week's hostile demonstrations against the Germans in Turin, Verona Milan, Trieste and Rome—following the arrival of Nazi troops and Gestapo agents in Italy—were doubtless another manifestation of the intimate material and spiritual relations between the two nations.

For reporting these disturbances, it will be remembered, two United States journalists in Belgrade were subjected to disciplinary measures by the Yugoslav Government, doubtless acting under pressure from the Axis.

Germany and Italy, like all great lovers, cannot bear having their intimacies exposed to the vulgar gaze of the outside world.

ATLANTIC AFTER-THOUGHT.

Few recent events have upset the Axis propagandists more thoroughly than the arrival of Lord Halifax at Annapolis, U. S. A., aboard Britain's newest battleship, *King George the Fifth.* Ever since his appointment to Washington was announced, Axis radio announcers had been hinting darkly that the new Ambassador would be lucky if he ever got to America, as their combined power had swept the Atlantic bare of British ships.

Once Lord Halifax had set foot on American soil, Berlin took exactly twenty-four hours to think it over, then announced that his unhindered crossing "**proves that Britain's command of the sea is a thing of the past.**" Most of us would have thought it proved just the opposite.

Rome's comment, yet another twenty-four hours later, was even more imaginative. It said; "**The calm patience of Italian soldiers and Blackshirts at Bardia and Tobruk contrasts gloriously with the haste and panic that distinguished Lord Halifax's crossing to America.**"

B.—BROADCASTS IN ASIATIC LANGUAGES.

GERMANS' FAKE S. O. S.

The German wireless of January 28 reported the torpedoing of the British ship *Empress of Australia* 200 miles off the coast of Dakar, adding that S. O. S. signals had been received from her. **London subsequently revealed that not only was the vessel safe in port, but in all probability she was there at the actual time when the alleged attack was supposed to have taken place.** It is surmised that the Germans were anxious to discover the whereabouts of the *Empress of Australia* and had sent out a fictitious S. O. S. in the hope of learning this.

A NAZI BOAST.

Dr. Goebbels' propaganda machine is truly unrivalled in the art of the exaggeration and manufacture of news items. But in its Hindustani broadcast of January 27 it surpassed itself. We were treated to an alleged quotation of Mr. Hudson, British Minister of Agriculture, in which **he was supposed to have said that every ship coming to Britain was sunk on the way.** And this despite the fact that British import figures for the first ten months of 1940 showed a 33 per cent. rise over the corresponding period of 1939 !

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES

OF THE

Pudukkottai State War Information Bureau.

1941—

LECTURE XXXI.

February	15, Saturday ...	Town Hall ...	6.30 p. m.
	16, Sunday ...	Avoor ...	9.45 a. m.
		Tirugokarnam ...	5.30 p. m.
	17, Monday ...	College (B) Tamil ...	10.25 a. m.
		Rani's School ...	10.25 a. m.
		Ramachandrapuram ...	5.30 p. m.
		Vendampatti ...	5.30 p. m.
	18, Tuesday ...	College (A) English ...	10.25 a. m.
		Koppanapatti, Girls' School	5.30 p. m.
		Alangudi ...	5.30 p. m.
	19, Wednesday.	Rangiam ...	5.30 p. m.
		Adanakkottai ...	5.30 p. m.
	20, Thursday ...	Viralimalai ...	5.30 p. m.
	21, Friday ...	C. S. M. School ...	10.00 a. m.

LECTURE XXXII.

22, Saturday ...	Town Hall ...	6.30 p. m.
23, Sunday ...	Rasiamangalam ...	9.45 a. m.
	College (A) English ...	10.25 a. m.
	Rani's School ...	10.25 a. m.
26, Wednesday.	College (B) Tamil ...	10.25 a. m.
	Perungalur ...	5.30 p. m.
	Virachilai ...	5.30 p. m.
27, Thursday ...	C. S. M. School ...	10.00 a. m.
	Chery School ...	5.30 p. m.
	Ponnamaravathi ...	5.30 p. m.
	Konapet ...	5.30 p. m.
	Kilanilai ...	5.30 p. m.
	Rayavaram ...	5.30 p. m.

Sri Brihadamba State Press, Pudukkottai. 1,000—15-2-41.